

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01 RSR-01

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R 220935Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6184

INFO AMCONSUL NAHA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

DOD WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

CINCPAC CAMP H M SMITH HI

COMUSJAPAN FUCHU JAPAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR MARR JA CB

SUBJECT: SR-71 FLIGHTS

REFS: A. TOKYO 10576 DTG 170900Z AUG 73

B. STATE 164063 DTG 172138Z AUG 73

SUMMARY: JAPANESE PRESS HAS GIVEN MAJOR COVERAGE TO
WIRE SERVICE REPORTS OF OKINAWA-BASED SR-71
RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS OVER CAMBODIA. OPPOSITION
PARTIES PLANNING INTERPELLATION OF GOVERNMENT IN
DIET ON THIS ISSUE. CONTROVERSY CENTERS AROUND
DEFINITION OF COMBAT OPERATIONS FOR PURPOSE OF
PRIOR CONSULTATIONS UNDER SECURITY TREATY AND EXPANSION
OF PERIPHERAL REGION OF FAR EAST TO INCLUDE CAMBODIA. END SUMMARY

1. AS PREDICTED REF A JAPANESE PRESS HAS ENERGETICALLY
USED AP AND UPI REPORTS OF SR-71 RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS
OVER CAMBODIA AS MAJOR ISSUE TO BELABOR GOJ. DESCRIPTION
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BY EMBASSY OF WIRE SERVICE STORIES AS "PURE SPECULATION"

GIVEN IMPORTANT COVERAGE IN PAPERS ON AUGUST 19 BUT HAS NOT SATISFIED PRESS OR OPPOSITION PARTIES, WHICH ARE PLANNING BRING UP QUESTION AS SUBJECT OF INTERPELLATION WHEN DIET RESUMES SESSION AUGUST 23.

2. OPPOSITION PARTIES APPARENTLY ARE HOPING ISSUE WILL GIVE IMPETUS TO THEIR CONTENTION THAT US MILITARY ACTIVITIES ARE INVOLVING JAPAN IN INDOCHINA WAR. ALTHOUGH GOJ IS STICKING TO POSITION THAT RECONNAISSANCE ACTIVITIES ARE NOT MILITARY COMBAT OPERATIONS AND THEREFORE DO NOT REQUIRE PRIOR CONSULTATION, BROAD SPECTRUM OF PRESS AND OPPOSITION OPPOSED TO THIS INTERPRETATION. POSITION OF MORE RESTRAINED ELEMENTS (ASAHI EVENING NEWS LEAD EDITORIAL AUGUST 21) IS THAT RESUMPTION OF BOMBING OF CAMBODIA WOULD LINK RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS CLOSELY WITH COMBAT OPERATIONS, THUS GIVING SUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR GOJ TO DEMAND PRIOR CONSULTATIONS. ADDITIONAL POSITION IS THAT ACTIVITIES OF U-2 PLANES, WHICH WERE DISCONTINUED BECAUSE OF SENSITIVITIES OF JAPANESE PUBLIC, SHOULD NOT BE RESUMED BY SUCCESSOR AIRCRAFT TO U-2. MANY COMMENTARIES ARE CALLING ON GOJ TO DEMAND REMOVAL OF SR-71'S FROM OKINAWA.

3. FURTHER CRITICISM BEING RAISED BY THIS ISSUE CONCERNS GOJ DEFINITION OF "FAR EAST" AND ITS PERIPHERAL REGIONS UNDER THE SECURITY TREATY. ACCORDING TO PRESS, GOJ TACIT APPROVAL OF US RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS FROM OKINAWA OVER CAMBODIA EXPANDS THIS PERIPHERAL REGION WESTWARD FROM VIETNAM TO INCLUDE CAMBODIA.

4. GOJ SPOKESMEN (PRINCIPALLY OKAWARA) FEEL THAT THEY WILL PROBABLY BE UNABLE TO SATISFY OPPOSITION INTERPELLATIONS WHEN THE DIET RESUMES SESSION TOMORROW. WE WILL MONITOR SITUATION CLOSELY AND KEEP DEPARTMENT INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS.
SHOESMITH

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Message Attributes

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